

## Message Text

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21-12

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00

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R 150601Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2598

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

USNMR SHAPE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MCAP, NL

SUBJECT: SECOND CHAMBER DEFENSE DEBATE

1. SUMMARY: DURING DEBATE ON DEFENSE BUDGET IN SECOND CHAMBER DECEMBER 13, DEFENSE MINISTER VREDELING SAID RNLAFF WOULD BE MAKING FURTHER STUDY OF POSSIBLE STARFIGHTER REPLACEMENT AND THAT STUDY WOULD BE CARRIED OUT ON EUROPEAN LEVEL AS FAR AS POSSIBLE. VREDELING SAID HE ALSO HOPED REPLACE N-5 WITH NEW AIRCRAFT. GON WILL ALSO BUILD FOUR NEW STANDARD FRIGATES. STATE SECRETARY STEMERDINK ANNOUNCED PLANS TO ORDER 60 OERLIKON AA GUNS AND TAKE OPTION ON ADDITIONAL 35. STEMERDINK ALSO DISCLOSED PLANS TO BUY 30 RECONNAISSANCE HELICOPTERS OVER NEXT YEAR. DEFMIN TOLD CHAMBER PROPOSALS TO REDUCE CONSCRIPTION TERM TO ONE YEAR WOULD COST 150 MILLION GUILDERS EXTRA AND FINAL DECISION ON WHICH VARIATION OF ONE-YEAR CONSCRIPTION PLAN WOULD BE APPROVED STILL NOT MADE. DEFENSE MINISTER SAID ARMY "GENERALS CONFLICT" NOW COMPLETELY SOLVED. FINALLY HE SAID HE EXPECTED WHITE

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PAPER TO BE READY BY MARCH 1974. END SUMMARY.

2. DEFENSE MINISTER VREDELING DEFENDED HIS PROVISIONAL DEFENSE BUDGET IN PARLIAMENT DECEMBER 13. RESPONDING TO CRITICISM FROM HIS OWN LABOR PARTY AND RADICALS THAT NOT ENOUGH BEING DONE TO CUT DEFENSE EXPENDITURES, VREDELING SAID HE HOPED THAT THE DEFENSE CUTBACKS RECOMMENDED IN THE LEFT WING ELECTION PROGRAM KERPUNT '72 (1.5 BILLION GUILDERS BY 1976) COULD STILL BE ACHIEVED. HE STRESSED ONE OF HIS PRINCIPAL TASKS WAS TO ACHIEVE A BETTER BALANCE BETWEEN OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURES AND EXPENDITURES FOR NEW EQUIPMENT. AS EARNST OF EFFORT TO ECONOMIZE, DEFENSE MINISTER ANNOUNCED THE ELIMINATION OF 8 ARMY GARRISONS.

3. DEFENSE MINISTER SAID RNLAf WOULD MAKE FURTHER STUDY OF AIRCRAFT TO REPLACE F-104. HE PROMISED CHAMBER STUDY WOULD BE CARRIED OUT ON EUROPEAN LEVEL AS FAR AS POSSIBLE. VREDELING SAID GON WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH DENMARK, NORWAY, BELGIUM AND ITALY, COUNTRIES WHICH ALSO FACED REPLACEMENT PROBLEMS. VREDELING SAID RECENTLY CONCLUDED DPC HAD RESULTED IN ALLIED AGREEMENT THAT GON'S AIR FORCE SHOULD SHIFT TO CONVENTIONAL OFFENSIVE TASKS WITH LIMITED NUCLEAR CAPABILITY. VREDELING SAID HE WOULD SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO THE CABINET TO EQUIP THE AIR FORCE BY 1980 WITH AIRCRAFT WHICH MET THESE REQUIREMENTS. DEFENSE MINISTER SAID THAT IN ADDITION TO REPLACING STARFIGHTER, GON ALSO INTENDED TO REPLACE LIGHTER TACTICAL N-5 AIRCRAFT AND THAT SUCH REPLACEMENT WOULD LEAD TO "SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGES IN TRAINING AND LOGISTICS". VREDELING SAID THAT WHEN NEW AIRCRAFT WERE IN PLACE AIR DEFENSE ROLE OF STARFIGHTER AND ITS NUCLEAR STRIKE TASK WOULD GO TO OTHER COUNTRIES AS HAD BEEN AGREED ON IN NATO STUDY OF TASK SHARING. MINISTER EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, REALIGNMENT OF TASKS WOULD NOT LEAD TO CUT IN COSTS AND THAT TWO SQUADRONS INVOLVED WOULD HAVE TO BE INTACT TO CARRY OUT THEIR CONVENTIONAL TASKS.

4. STATE SECRETARY STEMERDINK ANNOUNCED GON PLANNED TO BUY OERLIKON ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS WHICH WOULD BE MOUNTED ON LEOPARD TANK UNDER-CARRIAGES. GON HAS OPTION ON 35 OTHER GUNS. STEMERDINK SAID OPTION MIGHT NOT BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXERCISED IF STUDY INDICATED MISSILE SYSTEM WOULD BE MORE EFFICIENT. STEMERDINK SAID HE ALSO HOPED TO BE ABLE TO BUY 30 LIGHT RECONNAISSANCE HELICOPTERS FOR THE ARMY. THESE WITH 70 ALOUETTES WOULD REPLACE PIPER CUBS. VREDELING ANNOUNCED PLANS TO CONSTRUCT 4 STANDARD FRIGATES, THE FIRST OF WHICH WOULD BE LAUNCHED IN 1978. COSTS PER SHIP WOULD RUN ABOUT 208 MILLION GUILDERS.

5. VREDELING SAID PROPOSALS TO REDUCE MILITARY SERVICE TO ONE YEAR WOULD MEAN 150 MILLION GULDERS EXTRA IN COSTS. HE SAID HE WAS CONSIDERING 4 DIFFERENT PLANS ON HOW TO CUT TERM OF SERVICE, BUT HE HAD NOT YET DECIDED WHICH OPTION TO CHOSE. HE STRESSED THAT FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN HIS FINAL DECISION. VREDELING SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT DIFFICULTIES PLAGUING THE ARMY IN 1973 (RESIGNATION OF TOP GENERALS, ETC-- THE HAGUE 5318 AND 4870) WERE NOW BEHIND HIM.

6. DEFENSE MINISTER URGED CHAMBER TO REJECT TWO MOTIONS. ONE OFFERED BY VVD SPOKESMAN PLOEG CALLS FOR 50 MILLION INCREASE IN DEFENSE BUDGET. ANOTHER PROPOSED BY THE RADICALS CALLS FOR 190 MILLION GULDERS CUT IN DEFENSE EXPENDITURES. VOTE SCHEDULED FOR DEC 18. FINALLY VREDELING SAID HE EXPECTED DEFENSE WHITE PAPER TO BE READY IN MARCH 1974.

7. COMMENT: DEFENSE DEBATE WILL CONCLUDE WITH VOTES ON OPPOSITION AND RADICAL MOTIONS DEC 18. THEY ARE EXPECTED TO BE DEFEATED. DEFENSE DEBATE THIS YEAR WAS RATHER DESULTORY WITH ENERGY CRISIS AND GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO COPE WITH SAME OVERSHADOWING DEFENSE DISCUSSION. PARLIAMENTARIANS SHOWED MORE INTEREST IN VREDELING'S GENERAL OFFICER PERSONNEL PROBLEMS THAN IN MORE TRADITIONAL DEFENSE CONCERNS. DCM HAS APPOINTMENT WITH STATE SECRETARY STEMERDINK NEXT WEEK AND WILL (A) FOLLOW UP ON EXACTLY WHAT VREDELING MEANS WHEN HE TALKS ABOUT "FURTHER STUDY OF STARFIGHTER REPLACEMENT, ESPECIALLY ON EUROPEAN LEVEL," AND (B) ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OF GON VIEWS ON RNLAf'S FUTURE NUCLEAR ROLE.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY BUDGET, MILITARY AIRCRAFT, CONSCRIPTION, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, AIR FORCE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 15 DEC 1973  
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**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** garlanwa  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
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